

The expected return of the hero in fiction.

Can a fictional hero console, comfort or show directions to answer contemporary crises?

Can fiction try-out propositions applicable in reality?

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Abstract:

Fiction has from its very origin fulfilled the role as explaining and comforting medium². The heroes of the myths or of the Greek tragedies were used as moral compass and the behaviour of the heroes involved was meant to identify or empathize with. Since the beginning of Modernism both the hero and his moral function came under pressure within fiction. In recent times – when existing paradigms are shifting- fiction picks up again its role as consoling means. This paper conducts questions on the hero as moral or exemplary leader in fiction and examines tools this fictional hero can render for his audiences. By analysing contemporary issues and challenges this paper will seek out answers that could be defined by fiction and its heroes.

The contemporary velocity of life and the makeability idea led to disillusioned audiences with growing nostalgia. These factors seem to lead to the re-entry and re-appreciation of fictional heroes as moral or ethical means.

Writers are eager to fill the void between the ambitions and the reality of their audiences. This could explain the massive creation of fictionalised worlds with strong and moral-driven heroes, be it in novels, movies or TV series, by which audiences feel consoled and guided. Fiction and its heroes, once again, seem a way to lead audiences, to show the way to a new utopia. The fictional hero, with his focus on the horizon overcomes concrete obstacles and by doing so, becomes the exemplary leader he once was in ancient times.

Note: this paper concerns fictional works and defines the hero as: a character in a fictional narrative who is called by an inciting incident, who makes moral reflections which result in the setting of a goal that –if succeeded- will alter the existing context. Because of that goal a struggle with opponents and obstacles unfolds. The hero will sacrifice his life, if necessary, to accomplish the formulated goal. The impact of the hero depends on his failure or success.

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² E.g. *The Epic of Gilgamesh* (c. 2100/1500 BC), Homer: *Iliad*, *Odyssey* (c.800/750 BC), Virgil: *Aenid* (c. 20 BC).

Concrete:

The superpower of the hero

A hero is a character that opposes existing rules, morals and behaviour; in that sense the hero is an iconic protester in fiction: a character that disagrees and seeks moral transformation. That specific role of the hero is a means for fictional writers to speak out their opinions and hopes for real societies. Because of the connection between fiction and reality, the position and existence of the hero is ever changing. Therefore the hero and his reflective function is not new; it is as old as fiction itself but underwent drastic changes overtime. Since the turn of the millennium the world has seen drastic changes, be it economical, ecological or moral. Therefore audiences worldwide need to adapt, transform in order to cope with these novelties. In recent times there is a major increase of fiction based upon heroes with a (moral) goal, one could speak of the expected return of the hero. It seems that the fictional hero has returned just when the world needed him the most. So just like in Hollywood blockbusters, the hero arrives at the scene when all seems lost or unsolvable.

The hero transformed through time

The hero is an ambivalent character in fiction; the relationship between the hero and his audiences is a mutual one. The hero must transform in order to suit his audience, in order to be relevant. As audiences changed and became more distinctive the hero had to transform in different shapes and forms in order to retain his function.

Since Modernism the hero's appeal declined, neglect and mockery were his part. The hero was considered as nothing more than an ancient, romantic remnant. The mockery from the elite was based on the idea that one could perfectly do without a cartoon figure that flies in from Krypton (Superman), or that sprays spider webs from his wrists (Spider-man). Of course, the hero is more than his abilities and he comes in many shapes and forms, but this approach by audiences led to a marginalization of the hero as a character in fiction.

From the godlike figure in myths, to the half god in Greek tragedies the hero's function declined bit by bit because audiences themselves became more and more independent of the

existing paradigms. In that sense audiences adopted some features of fictional heroes.

This changing relationship started already -be it gradually- in the age of Enlightenment. By disarming the power of god and state, humanity had to construct new paradigms (): new ideas on how to live and achieve morality found their way. These resulted in uprisings and revolutions all over the world (from the French Revolution to the Boston Tea Party). Secondly, this emergent freedom of speech combined with the industrial revolution gave way to the idea of makeability of the world, a place where the individual was the measure of things. A world where education, trade and growth were no longer preserved for nobility. Through that process audiences steered away from the hero and became hero-like themselves.³ Humanity became more and more individual in its approach to morality and "Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness"⁴. Humanity took over the protesting and sacrificing feature of heroes.

This liberation process that started with Voltaire and his contemporaries, went through different stages and had different forms in e.g. Romanticism, Naturalism. It sparkled with love and colours in the sixties, and got to its extreme with the punk movement that literary wanted to abandon all rules and promoted an anarchistic way of living. This process aimed to free the world of its existing dogma's and to replace them by different morals and ethical standards.

The hero in Modernism

The fictional hero got his final deconstruction from within the high arts. During Modern and Post-Modern times the hero left the stage and became a pariah; he no longer was a means, or an exemplary leader within fiction. He became the opposite instead, a romantic leftover that was not able to answer the needs of audiences. In response, the popular media transformed the hero into a more human-like figure like e.g. Spiderman⁵ who had "financial problems and

³ Just to be clear: the Enlightenment and liberation process of humanity were – I believe- a noble and just cause. That this resulted in a declining impact for the fictional hero is an effect of that liberation process and not a judgement on the liberation of humanity from existing dogmas.

⁴ Source: Jefferson T., *Declaration of Independence*. 1776 (Original kept in National Archives Museum, Washington D.C)

⁵ Spider-man was created by Stan Lee en Steve Ditko. Spider-man first appeared in 'Amazing Fantasy' nr. 15, 1962.

family worries”⁶. The hero became deconstructed in the high art and democratized in popular art. (The relationship between high and popular art intertwined in Pop Art through artists like Roy Liechtenstein or Richard Hamilton)

In novels and theatre plays the so-called anti-hero stood up and replaced the hero as main character in narratives. This type of character was not new in storytelling; examples of anti-heroes can be found in Homers *Iliad* or Cervantes’ *Don Quixote*. It was the replacement by the anti-hero as pivotal figure in fiction that was innovative.

Realists like Anton Checkhov placed the anti-hero upfront in theatre with figures like *Ivanov* (1887) or *Olga, Maria and Irina* from *Three Sisters* (1901). And from the Second World War onwards the anti-hero became an increasingly popular figure. Writers like Beckett, Fassbinder, Miller, Williams among others presented figures that could not be further away from heroes or their features. Those anti-heroes tried to survive in their contexts, hoped for the best and braced themselves for the worst. They presented a world where the struggle with morals, power-structures and ideology seemed not only in vain but even unnecessary because the rules are set and therefore invariable. The presented fictional world connected with feelings from its audience, in that sense both mirroring and confirming society. Just like the characters, audiences seemed the plaything in the hands of (political) leaders. A world where the individual was insignificant and lived by circumstances: its ‘heroic’ actions consisted of adapting instead of transforming. The anti-hero became the core of fictional narratives and drama; the deconstruction of the hero was complete.

Audiences seemed in need of this final deconstruction and felt a rapport with the anti-hero through similar feelings of frustration and impotency to change anything. One had to play by the rules of society or reject them completely. This sort of deconstruction, cynical attitude and overall depression are a few of the things a hero cannot oppose to, therefore the fictional hero went hiding in the shadows, not able to beat the (Post-)Modern times.

The hero hears a call

With the turn of the millennium came a new tide: 9/11, the financial crisis that soon became a global one (with massive unemployment⁷), ecological disasters now and in the future⁸, and

⁶ Interview with Stan Lee. Source: <http://www.ign.com/articles/2000/06/26/interview-with-stan-lee-part-1-of-5> (04/06/2014)

⁷ Source: <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SL.UEM.TOTL.ZS> (04/06/2014)

⁴ The expected return of the hero in fiction.

all the other contemporary crises that threaten the world today. The anti-hero could do nothing more than confirm these current crises but audiences seemed fed up with this confirmation. Audiences needed a prospect, a horizon, a change.

The fictional hero straightened his back and underwent a transformation through contemporary writers in order to present himself when the world needed him most⁹. The anti-hero, as a acknowledging spokesman could no longer comfort humanity. The need arose for figures who did know how to get out of trouble, who had clear answers. (Note: political figures who focussed on change, possibilities and horizons became popular over the last decade, e.g. Barack Obama, Vladimir Putin. Politicians who opposed to change came under severe pressure e.g. the Arabic Spring movement, Bashar al-Assad, Recep Tayyip *Erdoğan*).

In fiction there was a shift in positions, the anti-heroes gave way to the re-entry of heroes. Because most writers feel the need to speak out on today's issues, the (super)hero emerged once again as exemplary leader.

What did the anti-hero miss?

In my opinion, there are two elements (the makeability idea and the velocity of life) leading to a third (nostalgia) that gave way to this new appreciation for the hero in fiction. These elements are strictly speaking neither artistic nor philosophical ; they emerge from the belly of society but have a profound impact on the high and popular arts and ethical ideas.

1) Makeability: since the industrial revolution the world has seen an increasing believe in the makeability of individuals, aka the American dream. The ancient boundaries of bloodlines became less important and gave way to the idea of possible accomplishments through talent and intense work. Chances are scattered around, we were told, and therefore it came down to seizing opportunities combined with zealous labour and talent. The makeability idea became the guideline for successful living.

The American dream became more and more a global way of thinking: the makeability of the

⁸ Source: <http://www.ncdc.noaa.gov/cag/time-series/global>, <http://www.unhcr.org/pages/49e4a5096.html> (04/06/2014)

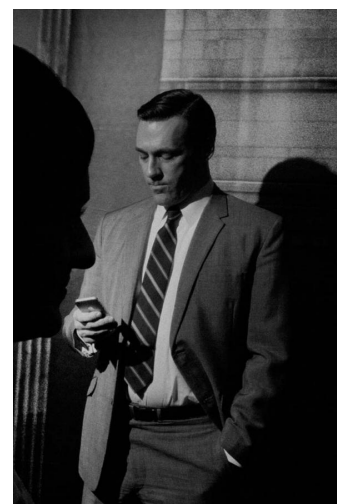
⁹ Just like during World War II the figure *Captain America* (Joe Simon and Jack Kirkby, 1941) was created in order to answer patriotic feelings and fear of American citizens.

individual where everything is possible as long as one does not give up. Settling for less is not an option, being happy with being happy is no longer enough. But that makeability idea did not give prosperity to the masses, who felt disappointed. Furthermore one feels as if it is one's own fault. (We just did not try hard enough. We just did not grab the opportunity.) Despite the amount of success stories, audiences felt that prosperity was not meant for the majority of them. A well-known example is the life story of Steve Jobs coming from his father's garage and ending as CEO of one of the coolest companies in the world is not the standard but an exception. Furthermore it is an old-fashioned heroic story, of a man never giving up despite the opposition. Popular biographies exemplify the need for heroic narratives. The makeability idea leaves audiences shattered, with feelings of failure.

2) Velocity of life: new media created an undeniable shift in contemporary life. The technological possibilities, social media and connectivity have created a stream of mass-information. Humanity is struggling to cope with these platforms and its usage. The seemingly never ending stream of stories coming from all different forms of media, the choices of how to sift and respond to those messages and their platforms leave us unsatisfied.

Professors Rosa (2010-2012) and Rushkoff (2013) both speak on velocity, proclaiming that on the surface of life everything is very hectic but just because of that, most people feel trapped in that permanent acceleration.

Since humankind left the safety net of religion behind and with it the eternal afterlife, people have tried to get as much unique experiences in this (one and only) life. But upgrading this life demands fast actions, continuous decisions on how to surf from experience to experience as Baricco (2006) called it. This way of life exhausts and leaves sentiments of dissatisfaction because no matter how fast we go: we will never feel, smell, and experience everything. Mankind seems more Faust-like than ever: ready to give up 'everything' for experiences but left behind with a feeling of 'nothing'. Technical possibilities or traveling the world in search of authentic experiences does not answer our deeper dreams and ambitions. One could say that this velocity left us with so many opportunities, that mankind is so liberated, that we are blown away by the mere choice and left disappointed.



3) Nostalgia: This paper links the makeability idea and velocity as catalysts and explanation for the nostalgia. It attaches these elements to the re-entry of heroes in fiction. Through the ability idea and the velocity of life we are both overwhelmed by opportunities and information. This results in sheer panic, in a run for gadgets on the one hand and in a need for quietness, profoundness on the other. We cannot choose between stillness and the rat race, so we do both. This being torn both ways makes us nostalgic about an unknown but authentic past. That past seems the place where our needs would have been fulfilled, a place where social networks would exist in reality, where there was time for real interaction, where craft was real, etc. The digital era makes us homesick, we long for the times when our parents and grandparents lived. And on the other hand we embrace modernity and its technological improvements.

Alex Majoli- Magnum for TIME
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Audiences feel the need to go back in time only partially, audiences want to live with the benefits but not with the burdens of pre-digital times. In other words: have the local, rural, 'easy' way of a few decades ago but with a smartphone in hand.¹⁰

We try to re-create those times in modified versions in order to experience something 'real' and 'authentic': e.g. Cittaslow¹¹ (a network of slow cities, inspired by the slow food movement), work holidays on farms or boats, Spartacus marathons, revival of old and forgotten vegetables, so called authentic bars, re-enactment of ancient times. And so on. In recent years we try to connect with a past that never really existed through a modified and nostalgic Disney world where we re-enact, re-create the past.

These three elements make us feel lonely, scared of the future or even worse indifferent to it. They are not linked to one generation, nor to one country or continent, therefore they have a universal character despite the individual experiences, which generates enormous amounts of different audiences for the hero.

Because of that anxiety there is a shift towards stories set in another time and space context or in dramatic settings where characters need to rebuild a totally new context, a new society.

¹⁰ Picture by: Alex Majoli—Magnum for TIME, April 7, 2014 Time magazine.

(‘Don Draper’, actor Jon Hamm checking his text during a break on the *Mad Men* set)

¹¹ source: <http://www.cittaslow.org/> (04/06/2014)

(Cineast Florian Opitz, among others, recently created a documentary "Speed- Auf der Suche nach den verlorenen Zeit" that investigates the process from makeability and velocity ending in nostalgia to a real way of life¹². This as contemporary answer to the Qatsi trilogy (Godfrey Reggio, 1982-2002).)

Can the hero answer the call?

In theatre, literature, games, movies and TV series heroes emerge once again as figures with a unique point of view: noticing the wrongdoings and the will to change his or her world whatever the cost. That sacrifice is not only a return to the classical hero but contributes to the hero's appeal and success within the different forms of media. The mass production within all forms of art and media is an answer to audiences in need for anaesthesia, consolation, reassurance, entertainment, hope, moral ideas and frameworks, etc. Writers all over the world understand those needs and create stories that answer that call. (Maybe producers, CEO's and managers understand this fear and anxiety even better and are happy to invest in -and get return from- all sorts of narratives.)

Box office numbers reveal the growing popularity of heroic characters in movies, be it in history, fantasy or science fiction genre. In 2013 the top ten was dominated by movies based upon heroic individuals that needed to alter their contexts e.g. Iron Man 3, The Hunger Games (2): Catching Fire, Man Of Steel, Gravity, Fast & Furious 6, Oz The Great and Powerful, Star Trek Into Darkness. Eight out of ten are part of a series / are sequels; this shows both the longing of audiences for heroes and the (commercial) adaptability of writers and producers.

As TV series can adapt even faster than movies, they are either focussing on fantasy/science-fiction worlds with series like e.g. *Game of Thrones*, *Arrow*, *Once Upon a Time*, *Atlanta*, *Penny Dreadful* or on historical societies with e.g. *Viking*, *Spartacus*, *The Tudors*, *The Borgias*, *Deadwood*, *Downton Abbey*. And thirdly there is this new attention for stories that describe the creation or dawn of new societies e.g. *Under The Dome*, *Flash Forward*, *The Walking Death*, *Revolution*.¹³

¹² source: http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=z_SvSNcWQDs (04/06/2014)

¹³ Source: http://www.imdb.com/search/title?title_type=tv_series (04/06/2014)
<http://www.tv.com/shows/> (04/06/2014)

(Where there was a trend pre-9/11 towards disaster,¹⁴ and stories about the last days of the earth, nowadays there is a shift towards the day *after* the disaster, where the focus is on people co-operating, working together, reflecting on their values and how to organize society. These narratives come in a contemporary fashion, hardly ever lasting longer than 50 minutes, which is convenient in a fast and hectic way of live.)

Novels are following the same path and are re-creating the heroic character in different genres (and levels of quality). Similar to movies and TV series one can see a trend towards strong heroes as main character: 'called' to lead, or to oppose and protest against existing paradigms. Those characters come in different shapes and forms, in all types of genres and became increasingly popular.¹⁵ The similarity between the different forms of media is striking: stories set in another time and space (from Man Booker Award winner Hilary Mantell¹⁶ to Philippa Gregory or Ken Follet¹⁷ whose novels are transformed into series or major movies) and just like in the movies the sequel has grown stronger (e.g. *Harry Potter* series, *Dan Brown* series, *Fifty Shades* series, *Millennium* Trilogy).

Based on those observations one can conclude that a) the hero is once again a means to reflect, both as moral compass and as case-study for human behaviour. b) Narratives set in other times and spaces gained popularity. c) Themes are centred around the struggle to survive, independency and moral change. d) Stories set in new societies and thus with other ethical rules grew popular. e) Those narratives contain characters who are willing to sacrifice themselves for the community, the greater good or a moral idea.

Critics could raise questions on the quality of these popular stories; reject the trend as "*Opium des Volkes*", mainstream, commercial or plain flat and without any profound literary quality. Despite such relevant criticism one cannot ignore the audience's need for those fictional

¹⁴ Conolly, J.M. (2009) *Reframing the Disaster Genre in a Post-9/11 World*.

¹⁵ Source:

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheet/ccc?key=0AonYZs4MzlZbdFVxOVQwSkhzN3NfcTVQRDIBc2RLekE#gid=0> (04/06/2014)

¹⁶ Hilary Mantell won the Man Booker Prize for *Wolf Hall* (2009), and its sequel In 2012 *Bring Up The Bodies*, (source: <http://www.themanbookerprize.com/people/hilary-mantell>)

¹⁷ Philippa Gregory's novels that were adapted: e.g. *The White Queen* (2013), *The Other Boleyn Girl* (2003) Ken Follet's novels that were adapted: e.g. *World Without End* (2012), *The Pillars of the Earth* (2011)

stories, therefore they need attention because they underline the mentioned feelings of being lost, desperate and disappointed .

To those opposing this new rise of popular heroes, Baricco (2006) presents the metaphor of the fried egg: the yolk is formed by those books that are defined as qualitative. The egg white, which has grown over the last decades makes it only harder to find the yolk but by no means reduces its worth (Broeksma, 2012).

The hero lets audiences try-out ideas

Both Nussbaum (1990, 1995) and Booth (1961, 1988) have proclaimed that the act of experiencing fiction has a profound impact on the ethical reflection by its readers. This paper adds the idea of try-out¹⁸: the fact that through narratives readers are shown a virtual reality in which they encounter an outcome of a particular behaviour by the characters in those narratives. This fictional behaviour is determined by a set of moral rules from within the story, which is a closed circuit, and so the reader relates to that given set of moral rules. By rejecting or accepting those rules and that behaviour there is a critical reflection that soothes the reader, either by distancing himself from the thoughts and actions or by embracing them as an elevated moral work set. In that sense fiction can lead the way, by a concrete example in the narrative, and therefore is an important try-out means for audiences in contemporary crises to adopt the heroes as exemplary leaders. Because the try-out is harmless for the reader he can fully engage without risks. This harmless try-out could explain the massive consummation of fictional heroes (in today's world).

In that sense these popular stories do more than entertaining, they console and show moral consequences of human behaviour. They take on themes that live with audiences (e.g. economic crisis, ecological challenges, technology etc.). They fulfill a) the need for stories. b) Knowledge drawn out of these stories. c) The entertainment value of stories. d) They present possible prospects on the horizon. e) They try-out a world, action or thought without actual consequences in reality.

¹⁸ Booth, W.C. (1988) *The Company We Keep. An Ethics of Fiction*. University of California Press, Berkely-Los Angeles-London.

¹⁰ The expected return of the hero in fiction.

The hero is everywhere, on every platform

As the hero is back in his original place, ready to sacrifice, personalize our dreams and fears, audiences can ‘feel’ like the hero on the one hand but look up to that hero at the same time, this is what Booth describes as “mental energy” (Booth, 1988, p. 298). The hero in the story changes what audiences would like to change in reality, the hero in fiction overcomes obstacles and opponents that audiences want to overcome. Identification and empathizing with those fictional characters creates that connection necessary to live in, try-out fictional answers to real time problems. Through empathy and admiration for the fictional character, the audience feels the ‘stardust’¹⁹ and can pull themselves up and try to walk in the footsteps of the fictional characters.

The hero himself needs a stage to act, and as the contemporary world is happy to give that stage, the hero has transformed into every desirable form. That this hero is not picky is mere luck for audiences and writers. Heroes are presented as idealistic humans equipped with dark sides in order to connect with their audiences: they can be pretentious (e.g. *Achilles*, *Odysseus*), hungry for power (e.g. *Macbeth*, *Agamemnon*), cruel (*Spartacus*, *Julius Caesar*) or tempted and lured into romantic desires (*Don Juan*, *Romeo and Juliet*).

The beginning of the millennium poses threats and opportunities for humanity as the ‘new’ is not settled in and the ‘old’ does not fit anymore. That seesaw is fertile ground for a hero to breed in different forms and faces. It proves that the hero really has a thousand faces, as Campbell (1968) put it.

Fiction is needed when reality fails

A world in transition -full of uncertainties- makes humanity look at the world like Janus, both to the future and the past. Google glasses and smartphones are seeing increasing sales²⁰

¹⁹ Defintion: A magical or charismatic quality or feeling (source: <http://www.oxforddictionaries.com>) (04/06/2014)

²⁰ Source: <http://www.gartner.com/newsroom/id/2665715> (04/06/2014)

making us more Cyborg than ever but that same technology is then used to put nostalgic flair to our own lives as *Instagram* filters are used by over 100 million users per month²¹.

But that does not do the trick, smartphones and other technologies do not alter a thing when it comes to a new moral framework to cope with. It merely complicates and blurs audiences' visions. Here the hero comes in as try-out so that audiences can see and feel the new era. The new construction needs an architect, the road to must be tested and prepared with a vision, a prospect on the horizon: a role the fictional hero, as crash test dummy, happily takes on.

The hopes and fears for the long-term problems and the need for short-term solutions, haunts audiences because they cannot choose between the super objective and the small story. The need for bigger pictures, basic norms to live by are urgent. This anxiety is just what writers, through their heroes, want to tackle and solve. Stories about succeeding in a super goal by undergoing a step-by-step encounter with obstacles are the road; the example the hero gives.

These sensations of anxiety, fear and disappointment lead stories back to the initial goal of fiction, where stories about gods were created to explain thunder, where stories of the betrayal or love between the gods on Olympus showed how to live or how not to live.

They explained what is not known, what is feared.²² And they gave a manual of life, a connection and direction in return. Therefore fictional stories seem needed when reality does not answer our needs.

Since clear answers are not given, audiences cling to fictional individuals. Because fiction places questions and answers in a completely organized paradigm with a (ethically based) premise, trying to connect with audiences. Fiction can help us understand the surrounding world and show ethical values. This explains the need and the popularity of today's fictional heroes: a loner, a prophet who combines moral values with a survival of the fittest attitude. Be it by repertoire heroes like *Antigone* or *Hamlet*, by superheroes like *Superman* or the *X-men* or real people we idolize and define as heroes like *Jeanne d'Arc* or *Barack Obama*.

Back to the roots through contemporary technology

²¹ Source: <http://blog.instagram.com/post/44078783561/100-million> (04/06/2014)

²² See: Nussbaum, 2012

The manoeuvrability of the hero is the base for his superpowers. The hero adapts himself to every need, for every audience, be it elite or mainstream, highly or lowly educated, in search of entertainment or looking for profound thoughts.

Admiration, or even envy, in whatever way is inherent to every human; therefore the appeal of the hero has just like the hero himself a thousand faces.

The hero, a thru transformer, can present an abstract world; can attest what is happening, and even where we could be going to.

The power of the hero within fiction can show the greatness, the aspirations of humankind, show directions to an exit or a path to follow. It can be utopian, smart, stupid, funny or consoling. As long as the narrative inspires one viewer the hero has achieved his goal. As long as audiences can interpret the hero's dream, the horizon and its perspective, heroes are useful in fiction (and thus in reality).

In Conclusion: The hero sheds his light

Fiction, and the hero's journey can console and comfort because the hero has the same anxieties as his audience, the difference between both is that the fictional hero stands up and takes life in his hands in order to change the world he lives in.

The fictional hero emerges like a beacon; trying out thoughts and actions in order to cope with contemporary but universal obstacles.

No matter which medium is chosen by writers – nostalgia, fantasy, history or science fiction- the goal remains the same: comfort audiences, re-construct society through an eternally existent character, the hero. With his thousand faces to suit everyone: from the geek to the worried parent, from the intellectual reader to the protester, the hero lets audiences safely try out to change the world by identifying with the hero.

Fictional heroes, can only hope the world remains in trouble, because when humanity takes off again, the need for heroic fiction will decline automatically. At that point audiences will create their own heroes journey. The fictional hero must think: "Long live the crisis, the fears

and the uncertainties. It makes me live; it is my blood and breath. And if the world is saved and I'm not needed anymore, rest assured that I will be waiting in the corridors just until you need me."

Benjamin Van Tourhout (2014)

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